



[Billing Code: 4710-09]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice: 8920]

Meeting on United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement Environment Chapter Implementation, Working Group on Environmental Cooperation, and Public Session

AGENCY: Department of State

ACTION: Announcement of meetings; solicitation of suggestions; invitation to public session.

SUMMARY: The Department of State and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) are providing notice that the governments of the United States and Kingdom of Morocco (the governments) intend to hold a meeting to review implementation of the Environment Chapter of the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement (FTA), a meeting of the United States-Morocco Working Group on Environmental Cooperation (Working Group), and a public session in Rabat, Morocco, on October 28, 2014, at the Ministry of Environment, to discuss implementation of the Environment Chapter and Joint Statement on Environmental Cooperation.

During the meetings, the governments will review and discuss implementation of the Environment Chapter of the FTA. The governments will also discuss how the

United States and Morocco can strengthen Morocco's capacity to protect and conserve the environment, highlight past bilateral environmental cooperation, review activities under the 2010-2012 Plan of Action, and develop a 2014-2017 Plan of Action. The Department of State and USTR invite the members of the public to submit written suggestions on items to include on the meeting agenda or in the 2014-2017 Plan of Action.

The Department of State and USTR also invite interested persons to attend a public session where the public will have the opportunity to ask about implementation of both the Joint Statement and the Environment Chapter of the United States-Morocco FTA.

DATES: The public session will be held on October 28, 2014, in Rabat, Morocco at the Ministry of Environment. Suggestions on the meeting agenda and/or the 2014-2017 Plan of Action should be provided no later than October 26, 2014, to facilitate consideration.

ADDRESSES: Those interested in attending the public session should e-mail Geoff Finger at FingerGT@state.gov to find out the time of the session.

Suggestions on the meeting agenda and/or the 2014-2017 Plan of Action should be e-mailed to FingerGT@state.gov or faxed to Geoff Finger at (202) 647-5947, with the subject line "United States-Morocco Environmental Cooperation." Those with access to the internet can view and comment on this notice by going to:

<http://www.regulations.gov/#!home> and searching on docket number DOS-2014-0025.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Geoff Finger, (202) 647-4828.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Environment Chapter of the FTA includes obligations on each Party to ensure that its environmental laws and policies provide for and encourage high levels of environmental protection, effectively enforce its environmental laws, and provide opportunities for public participation on matters related to the implementation of the chapter. In the Joint Statement, the governments of the United States and Morocco (1) recognize “the importance of protecting the environment while promoting sustainable development in concert with the expanded bilateral trade and investment ties accompanying the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement (‘FTA’)” and (2) indicate their intent “to pursue efforts to enhance bilateral environmental cooperation... .” The governments express their intention to undertake cooperative environmental activities pursuant to the Joint Statement. In paragraph 5 of the Joint Statement, the governments establish the Working Group to coordinate and review environmental cooperation activities. As envisioned in the Joint Statement, the Working Group will endeavor to develop a Plan of Action, review and assess cooperative environmental activities pursuant to the Plan of Action, recommend

ways to improve such cooperation, and undertake such other activities as may seem appropriate to the governments. The Plan of Action is a tool to establish goals, objectives, and areas for cooperation, including short-, medium-, and long-term bilateral and/or regional projects and activities. Through this notice, the United States is soliciting the views of the public with respect to the 2014-2017 Plan of Action.

In February 2010, the governments established the 2010-2012 Plan of Action for environmental cooperation with the following primary areas of cooperation: (1) Institutional and Policy Strengthening for Effective Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Laws, Including Natural Resource-Related Laws; (2) Biodiversity Conservation and Improved Management of Protected Areas and Other Ecologically Important Ecosystems; (3) Improved Private Sector Environmental Performance; and (4) Environmental Education, Transparency and Public Participation in Environmental Decision-Making and Enforcement. The governments intend to adopt a 2014-2017 Plan of Action at the meetings, which the United States expects will build upon the cooperative work initiated in the 2010-2012 Plan of Action.

Members of the public, including NGOs, educational institutions, private sector enterprises, and all other interested persons are invited to submit written suggestions regarding items for inclusion in the meeting agendas or in the new

Plan of Action. Please include your full name and identify any organization or group you represent. We encourage submitters to refer to:

- United States-Morocco Joint Statement on Environmental Cooperation;
- 2010-2012 Plan of Action Pursuant to the United States-Morocco Joint Statement on Environmental Cooperation;
- Chapter 17 of the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement; and
- Final Environmental Review of the United States–Morocco Free Trade Agreement.

These documents are available at:

<http://www.state.gov/e/oes/eqt/trade/morocco/index.htm>

October 17, 2014

Date

Deborah Klepp
Director
Office of Environmental Quality and
Transboundary Issues
U.S. Department of State

[FR Doc. 2014-25174 Filed 10/21/2014 at 8:45 am; Publication Date: 10/22/2014]